

and work and meeting the changing emotional, educational, and physical needs of their children. Mothers strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment. They help their children navigate the often stormy waters of an increasingly complicated world. They teach their children to approach conflict with words, not violence; to cherish the richness of our diversity and reject prejudice in any form; and to believe in themselves.

Each year we set aside this special day to acknowledge all that our mothers—whether biological or foster, adoptive or stepmothers—have given us. It is a time to reflect on all we have gained from their unwavering care, guidance, and sacrifice, and a time to express openly our deep gratitude and abiding love. The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 8, 1914 (38 Stat. 770), has designated the second Sunday in May of each year as "Mother's Day" and requested the President to call for its appropriate observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 14, 2000, as Mother's Day. Whether we are able to share this special day with our mothers in person or are blessed only with our memories of their love, in our hearts they remain with us always. I urge all Americans to express their love and respect for their mothers on this day, to speak the words of appreciation we too often neglect to say, and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7306 of May 11, 2000

National Equal Pay Day, 2000

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Long before President Kennedy signed into law the Equal Pay Act of 1963, women had proved their ability to contribute to America's labor market. During World War II, when labor shortages offered women an unprecedented opportunity to work outside the home, women excelled at jobs traditionally reserved for men. Yet, despite their enormous contribution to maintaining American production lines, women in the workforce were paid less than their male counterparts.

For most of our Nation's history, in fact, women have served within a sharply segregated workforce, enjoying fewer educational and training opportunities than men and struggling all too often to disprove confining stereotypes about their roles and capabilities. But throughout the decades, women of courage, energy, and determination have continued to enter the workforce and open doors of opportunity for succeeding generations. Today, more women are in the labor force than ever before; the female unemployment rate is at its lowest in more than 40 years; the poverty rate for households headed by women is the low-

est ever recorded; and the pay gap has narrowed substantially since 1963.

Despite these gains, the battle for equal pay for women is far from over. Although 37 years have passed since the passage of the Equal Pay Act, the average woman today must still work an additional 17 weeks a year to earn what the average man earns. That pay gap grows wider as women grow older, and it is widest for women of color. African American women earn 64 cents for every dollar earned by white men, and Hispanic women earn just 55 cents. While some of these disparities can be attributed to differences in education, experience, and occupation—which themselves often reflect troubling inequities—several studies confirm that a significant pay gap persists even after we account for these factors.

My Administration has worked hard to ensure that every American is treated with fairness and dignity in the workplace, and this year I proposed a \$27 million equal pay initiative in my fiscal year 2001 budget to combat unfair pay practices against women. This initiative includes \$10 million in funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to identify more quickly and respond more effectively to wage discrimination. The initiative would also enable the EEOC to launch a public service campaign to educate employees and employers about their rights and responsibilities under equal pay laws. In addition, the initiative includes funding for the Department of Labor to train women for jobs they have not traditionally held, such as those in the high-paying technology sector, and to help employers recruit and train qualified women for nontraditional occupations.

I have also urged the Congress to strengthen existing wage discrimination laws by promptly passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. This proposed legislation would provide increased penalties for equal pay violations; prohibit employers from punishing employees who share salary information with coworkers; and provide funding for research on wage discrimination and for increased training for EEOC employees who work on wage discrimination cases.

Throughout the decades, working women have persevered in their struggle for equal pay, buoyed by an unshakable faith in their own skills and self-worth and a firm commitment to the ideals of our democracy. On National Equal Pay Day, I urge all Americans to join the crusade to secure equal pay for women and to create a just and honorable work environment in which all our citizens are rewarded fairly for their talents, experience, and contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 11, 2000, as National Equal Pay Day. I call upon government officials, law enforcement agencies, business leaders, educators, and the American people to recognize the full value of the skills and contributions of women in the labor force. I urge all employers to review their wage practices and ensure that all their employees are paid equitably for their work.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Inde-

pendence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7307 of May 11, 2000

Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

From our earliest days as a Nation, America has been blessed with citizens of courage and character who have dedicated their lives to keeping the peace in our communities. Five years after the creation of the U.S. Marshals Service in 1789, U.S. Marshal Robert Forsyth was shot and killed in the line of duty. He was the first of more than 14,000 law enforcement personnel since that time to give his life to uphold the law and protect the people he was sworn to serve.

Our Nation owes a lasting debt of gratitude to the men and women of our law enforcement community who, each day, put their lives at risk to protect us and ensure the safety of our families and homes. Because of their skill, valor, and commitment, we have begun to turn the tide on crime in America. The murder rate is at its lowest level in more than 30 years, and the overall crime rate is at its lowest point in 25 years. There are many reasons for this progress, but police chiefs, policymakers, and citizens alike agree that the dedication of our law enforcement officers and the spread of community policing have been critical factors. Today, in cities and communities across America, residents and police officers are working in partnership, forming neighborhood watch organizations, banding together against drug dealers and gangs, and building connections that are the core of community life and the foundation of a civil society.

Unfortunately, we need look no further than the tragic losses suffered by law enforcement officers to recognize the risks that these brave men and women face every day. Last year, 50 police officers were struck down in the line of duty, and another 84 lost their lives in accidents. For these heroes, the safety of their fellow citizens was their purpose and passion, and they made the ultimate sacrifice to fulfill their duty.

We can never repay these gallant men and women for their service or adequately comfort their families. We can only honor their memory—not only in words and ceremony, but in our determination to promote justice, uphold the law, and preserve the peace and safety they helped purchase with their lives.

By a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962 (76 Stat. 676), the Congress has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" and the week in which it falls as "Police Week," and, by Public Law 103-322 (36 U.S.C. 136), has directed that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 15, 2000, as Peace Officers